WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A purified and isolated *Vezf1* gene having the nucleic acid sequence set forth in FIGURE 1 (SEQ ID NO:1).

2. The *Vezf1* gene of claim 1, as contained in a vector molecule.

3. A purified and isolated nucleic acid encoding a *Vezf1* protein, wherein the *Vezf1* protein has an amino acid sequence as set forth in FIGURE 1 (SEQ ID NO:2).

4. The nucleic acid of claim 3, contained in an expression vector and operably linked to a promoter element.

5. The nucleic acid of claim 4, wherein the promoter element is not the *Vezf1* promoter.

6. An expression vector containing the DB1 gene operably linked to a heterologous promoter element, wherein the promoter element is selectively active in vascular endothelial cells.

7. A non-human animal in which one or both endogenous *Vezf1* alleles has been altered by homologous recombination with an exogenously introduced nucleic acid.

8. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which encodes a *Vezf1* protein.

9. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which encodes a mutated *Vezf1* protein.

10. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which is the nucleic acid of claim 1.

11. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which is the nucleic acid

of claim 3.

12. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which is the nucleic acid of claim 4.

13. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which is the nucleic acid of claim 5.

14. A non-human transgenic animal carrying a transgene which is the nucleic acid of claim 6.

15. A method of diagnosing a vascular disorder in a subject, comprising measuring the amount of a *Vezf1* gene product, where the gene product is selected from the group consisting of RNA and DNA, in a test sample taken from the subject and comparing that amount to the amount of *Vezf1* gene product in a matched control sample, wherein a difference in the amount of *Vezf1* gene product in the test sample and the control sample correlates with the presence of a vascular disorder in the subject.

16. A method of diagnosing a heritable vascular disorder in a subject, comprising characterizing a *Vezf1* gene in the subject and comparing the characteristics of the gene to the normal *Vezf1* gene, where a difference in characteristics of the *Vezf1* gene in the subject and the normal *Vezf1* gene correlates with the presence of a heritable vascular disorder in the subject.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein the vascular disorder is a vascularized neoplasm.

18. A method of increasing angiogenesis in a tissue of a subject in need of such treatment, comprising increasing the amount of *Vezf1* activity in the tissue.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the tissue is myocardial tissue.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein the tissue is brain tissue.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein the tissue contains a wound.

22. The method of claim 18, wherein the tissue is a graft.

23. A method of decreasing angiogenesis in a tissue of a subject in need of such treatment, comprising decreasing the amount of *Vezf1* activity in the tissue.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein the tissue is a neoplasm.

25. A method of identifying an endothelial cell, comprising identifying the expression of a molecule selected from the group consisting of a *Vezf1*-encoding RNA or a *Vezf1* protein in the cell.